

Modal Verbs in a Curriculum-Based EFL Textbook of Senior High School in Indonesia: A Corpus-Based Study

By Ikmi Nur Oktavianti

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Abstract

Modality is ubiquitous among language users, and its use is highly necessary to qualify a proposition (Perkins, 1982). Interestingly, modal verbs as the prototype manifestation of modality are said to be among the most problematic grammatical unit among non-native students (Holmes, 1988; Mukundan & Khojasteh, 2011; Römer, 2004). It is then appealing to examine the use of modal verbs in an EFL textbook as EFL textbooks are designed to equip the learners with sufficient linguistic knowledge to be communicatively competent (Gilmore, 2007). In an EFL context, corpus might assist the design of teaching materials since it can provide the closest representation of actual language use (Römer, 2004). Regarding the condition in which corpus consultation in EFL textbooks in Indonesia is unknown, given that corpus is not widely recognized and used in Indonesia (Crosthwaite, 2020), it is important to revisit the language content in Indonesian EFL textbooks. This study focuses on the analysis of modal verbs in conversation sections in a curriculum-based EFL textbook, *Bahasa Inggris*, for grade XII as comparison with the spoken sub-corpus of a general reference corpus, *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA). The study analyzes the frequency of use of modal verbs in the textbook and the corpus to find out the similarities and the mismatches of modal verbs usage. The results show that both textbook and COCA use core modals (e.g. *must*) and quasi-modals (e.g. *have to*) and the use of *have to* are more frequent than *must* in both of the data sources. Despite the similarities, there are some mismatches of modal verbs usage in textbook and COCA. In COCA, modal verbs *would*, *can*, *will*, *be going to* occupy the highest position, while modal verbs *can*, *will*, *have to*, *should* are most frequently used in the textbook. In terms of variants, there are limited numbers of quasi-modals and contracted forms of modal verbs used in conversation in the textbook that do not correspond to the nature of spoken language. Besides, textbook conversations lack the reduced form of modal verbs (e.g. *'ll*) and modal verb *would* is absent (while *would* is the most frequent in COCA), making it unnatural for spoken context. Pedagogically speaking, these findings should be taken into account by ELT materials writers in Indonesia to enhance the quality and authenticity of the language input for the learners.

Keywords: *corpus, modal verb, EFL textbook, Indonesia*

Introduction

In language use, speakers talk about the truth-value condition and something that is possible or necessary. This expression is known as modality (Collins, 2009; Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 1990) and is manifested through numerous linguistic realizations, including modal verbs (Collins, 2009; Palmer, 1990; Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985). Hence, the use of modal verbs is important and as dynamic as a society (Collins, 2014). Moreover, modal verbs are inevitably important since each of them might refer to different meanings (Coates, 1983), and they even pragmatically differ; for example *may* have six different (pragmatic) meanings (Huddleston, 1971: 297). Even though modal verbs usage is declining in written corpora and there is a modality deficit—the gap between declining use of core modal verbs and limited use of new modal verbs (Leech, 2013), but modal verb decrease was not significant in spoken corpora, and the modality deficit was unproven in spoken corpora (Leech, 2013). Thus, the use of modal verbs in spoken language is still important to study.

In English language teaching and learning, it is then also crucial to consider the use of modal verbs since they are one of the most problematic grammatical units (Holmes, 1988; Mukundan & Khojasteh, 2011; Römer, 2004). Teachers and textbook writers should present the modal verbs in teaching materials (e.g., textbooks, to equip the learner with the real use of English, the kind of English the speakers actually use in daily life). This aims to support the learners to be communicatively competent. Gilmore (2007) states that what teachers are trying to achieve with classroom materials is to prepare learners to be able to communicate effectively in the target language. Modal verbs, however, are problematic among native English speakers. In expressing doubt and certainty in English, there are modal verbs *may* and *might*, but *may* is

also used to express other modal meanings (permission) and can serve as a politeness device (Holmes, 1988). In the EFL context, the teaching of modal verbs becomes one of the grammatical problems (Römer, 2004). Therefore, non-native speakers of English should not rely on their intuition in writing materials on modal verbs or in using modal verbs in teaching materials. Consultation to the corpus as the representative of the English language is thus compulsory in terms of writing EFL teaching materials because corpus provides a large collection of texts showing the authentic use of language, which can be beneficial for designing teaching materials (Burton, 2012; Timmis, 2015).

Interestingly, other researchers (Collins, 2006; A Gilmore, 2004; Holmes, 1988) have found some mismatches between the language used in textbooks and the 'real' use of English. In other words, the language used in textbooks does not correspond to how English is actually used; for instance, the textbook conversations do not represent the actual English conversation. The mismatches of textbook language and real use are identified commonly through the comparison of language in textbooks and the results of corpus investigation. Some corpus-based studies on textbooks (Arellano A., 2018; Burton, 2012; Cheng & Warren, 2007; Leung, 2016; Norberg & Nordlund, 2018; Phoocharoensil, 2017; Yoo, 2000) prove that ELT textbooks lack what it is used in real English. Focusing on modal verbs, they have been specifically studied by Khojasteh & Kafipour (2012), claiming that the presentation of modal verbs in Malaysian textbooks is not in accordance with the real use of modal verbs, as recorded in the corpus. Although the study of modal verbs using corpus is not totally new (see Hardjanto, 2016; Orlando, 2009; Qian, 2017; Yang, 2018) and there are numerous modal verbs studied in language teaching (ESL or EFL) in Japan, Malaysia, Iran (Mukundan & Khojasteh, 2011; Nozawa, 2014.; Talati-Baghshi et al., 2018; Yamamoto, 1999), but little is known in the use

of modal verbs in Indonesia EFL textbook. Although studies on textbooks have been carried out in Indonesia, they mostly focus on the discussion of the task and cultural value (Ayu & Indrawati, 2018; Mayangsari et al., 2018; Rahmah et al., 2018; Widodo, 2018), and the representation of gender role (Ena et al., 2016). Apart from the Indonesian context, studies on English textbooks also focus more on the utilization of the textbook (e.g., Mede' & Yalçın (2019), the comparison of textbook and national exam (Aziez & Aziez, 2018) or literature and literacy perspective on the textbook (e.g., Raquitico, 2014), while the linguistic aspect of the textbook (e.g., the use of modal verbs) is not widely discussed. Therefore, this study investigates the use of modal verbs in a curriculum-based EFL textbook for grade XII compared to the 'real' use of modal verbs represented in a corpus.

To discuss the problem comprehensively, the study delimits the analysis to the conversation section of the textbook because, in some cases, it is not an example of natural English conversation (Carter, 1998; Cheng & Warren, 2007; Gilmore, 2004). Since spoken language has its own characteristics and features (Halliday, 1990), it is important to consider this point in designing spoken language materials (e.g., conversations) in textbooks. The textbook under study is *Bahasa Inggris Kelas XII* (Widiati et al., 2015), a curriculum-based EFL textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia for grade 12 of senior high school. The textbook was selected because it is the textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture, which means it is widely used in schools. Moreover, this study focuses on the 12th grade English textbook, the last grade in senior high level, indicating that the level of complexity is higher than that in the lower grades. Thus, the collocational knowledge at this level should be more complex, and thus it is interesting to investigate. The textbook is investigated compared to a general reference corpus, COCA, one of the largest

English corpora containing contemporary English, which is relevant to the language used in 2010s textbooks. COCA comprises more than one billion words of various English usage from 1990—2019 (Davies, 2008), showing that it is a huge and updated corpus. It is, hence, valid to represent ‘real’ English use. This study is expected to pedagogically inform materials writers in relation to the presentation of modal verbs in the textbook. In order to achieve this, this study attempts to answer the following questions: (1) what are the most frequent modal verbs used in the conversation section of the textbook *Bahasa Inggris* for grade XII of senior high school in Indonesia, (2) what are the most frequent modal verbs used in the spoken sub-corpus of COCA as the representation of ‘real’ English use?, and (3) to what extent the use of modal verbs in the textbook and corpus is similar and/or different?

Corpus and Teaching Materials

Corpus (*plural* corpora) derives from the Latin word that means ‘body.’ Corpus is defined as a digital or computerized collection of texts (Crawford, 2015; T. McEnery & Hardie, 2012; Sinclair, 1991; Timmis, 2015) and the study which bases the analysis on corpus is called corpus linguistics (T. McEnery & Hardie, 2012; T. McEnery & Wilson, 2001). Practically, it is used to assist linguistic studies because it comprises a large scale of qualitative and quantitative data, which enables more comprehensive and more accurate analysis (Burkette & Kretzschmar Jr., 2018). Corpus can be labelled as big data (in the linguistics field) since it consists of extremely large data, has a high speed of velocity, and is taken from various sources, for example, newspapers, novels, academic texts, blogs, etc. (Burkette & Kretzschmar Jr., 2018; Hurwitz et al., 2013).

The use of corpus, nevertheless, is not extensively used in ELT. Regarding materials design, corpus linguistics might benefit from exposing the students to native speakers' intuition in using chunks, collocation, and other multiword combinations and in dealing with what should be prioritized or emphasized in the teaching materials. In terms of providing sufficient information on collocation, chunks, it is nearly impossible to use the writer's intuition merely. This challenge can be overcome by consulting corpus in designing teaching materials. However, corpus consultation is less recognized in textbook writing due to some reason (Burton, 2012; Shin & Chon, 2011). Since corpus can provide frequency information on the use of a particular linguistic unit drawn from a large scale of data, it is plausible to rely on corpus investigation in considering what should be taught and/or what should be prioritized in teaching (Jones & Waller, 2015; T. McEnery & Xiao, 2013; Szudarski, 2017; Timmis, 2015). As an example, teachers cannot teach or cover all materials in grammar class, so principled decisions about the materials are crucial (Conrad, 2000). According to Conrad (2000), these principled decisions can be based on corpus information as done by Conrad & Biber (2009), who developed a corpus-based grammar book, providing grammar teaching and learning materials that are more relevant to the daily use of English. Not limited to a grammar book, there are also some coursebooks designed by using a corpus-based or corpus-informed approach, such as *In Focus* (Browne et al., 2013), *Touchstone* (McCarthy et al., 2014), *Unlock* (Ostrowska et al., 2014), among others. These books were designed by consulting the language aspect to corpora (e.g. Browne et al., 2013; McCarthy et al., 2014; Michael McCarthy, 2004).

In spite of the fact that not many teachers consider corpus to consult their materials, McCarthy (2004) says that corpus-informed materials are special. They are different from intuition-based materials since corpus-informed materials are based on actual use. Although

the results are adjusted to the teaching needs, the materials are not invented, and the contexts are authentic because the data sources are from empirical usage of language (e.g., newspapers, magazines, talk shows, fiction, academic texts, and so on). In terms of authenticity, it is also argued by Römer (2004) which claims that corpus can contribute to pedagogical aspects in terms of its authenticity. Apart from the debate of the term *authenticity* (see Widdowson, 1978), Gilmore (2007) emphasizes that what matters in teaching materials is their ability to equip learners to be communicatively competent. On top of everything, the main idea of being authentic is the text is not specifically designed for teaching purposes (Timmis, 2015). Thus, following this definition, a corpus is obviously authentic and might be able to provide as real language data as possible to achieve the aim of materials design in language teaching.

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Modal Verbs

Modal verbs are the members of the auxiliary category in the English language (Payne, 2011; Warner, 2009), expressing modality (Palmer, 1990) in the dichotomy of non-modal auxiliaries (i.e., *do*, *have*, *be*). Classified as auxiliaries, modal verbs are the complement of verbal composition in which it semantically adds up the proposition or qualifies the proposition. As for the member of modal verbs category, this study refers to those listed by Quirk, et al. (1985) and other classification of modal verbs (e.g., Collins, 2009; Leech, Hundt, Mair, & Smith, 2009), so the modal verbs in this study include central (or core) modals and quasi-modals (the *quasi-modals* term refers to that described by Collins [2009] or equivalent with semi-modal (Leech, Hundt, Mair, & Smith, 2009). Thus, in a complete version, table 1 lists the 35 modal verbs. This set of modal verbs was selected since they are the complete list of modal verbs found from the body of literature which is also used by English speakers based on the

representation in COCA.

Table 1

List of English modals and quasi-modals

Modal Verbs	
Core/Central Modals	Quasi-Modals
<i>must, shall, should, will, would, can, could, may, might</i>	<i>ought to, dare, had be¹⁴, would rather, need, need to, want to, have to, have got to, be going to, be able to, be supposed¹³ be willing to, be about to, be allowed to, be likely to, be due to, be bound to, be meant to, be obliged to be apt to</i>

Core modals differ from quasi-modals in terms of morphosyntactic and syntactic characteristics since core modals are likely to be in non-finite forms; the preterite forms do not necessarily indicate finiteness (Coates, 1983; Warner, 2009). Unlike core modals, quasi-modals agree to the subjects. Thus they have finite forms indicating past tense (Warner, 2009). Semantically, quasi-modals are less likely to express modality, different from the core modal counterparts. Diachronically, core modals are the “ancient” members of modal category since the earlier periods of English (Lightfoot, 1979; Warner, 2009), originating from lexical verbs (Brunner, 1970; Quirk & Wrenn, 1960). This set of modal verbs (i.e., core modals and quasi-modals) is recorded in COCA and some other corpora, such as *British National Corpus* and *Global Web-based English*, which indicates that these modal verbs are used by English speakers across the globe. Thus they are important to be mastered by English learners.

In regard to the presentation of modal verbs in textbooks, much work has proved that there are discrepancies in the use of modal verbs in textbooks and real use of English. Nozawa (2014) investigates the use of modal verbs in EFL textbooks to express politeness. The research results show that the proportion of politeness requests using modal verbs in two EFL textbooks

is only 11% which is not sufficient. As this happened in the EFL context, it cannot support the need of the learners to get as much exposure as possible from the teaching materials. Relevant to Nozawa's study, Durán et al. (2007) examine modal verbs in textbooks and grammar books. The results of this study indicate that the presentation of modal verbs in both textbooks and grammar books is not sufficient to cover the complex semantic and pragmatic aspects of the modal verbs. Another relevant research was carried out by Orlando (2009). Orlando (2009) analyzes the collocations of modal verbs in textbooks in comparison with Standard English corpora. This study shows that the frequency of modal verb patterns in the textbooks is different from those in the *British National Corpus*. In another context, in Finland, Nordberg (2010) explores the modality portrayed in Finnish upper secondary school EFL textbooks. It is found that the presentation of modal verbs expressing modality in school textbooks differs from the real use of English. EFL upper secondary school textbooks seem to offer a one-sided representation of the way the modal verbs are used. In the Asian context, two studies conducted by Khojasteh & Kafipour (2012) and Mukundan & Khojasteh (2011) show that there are discrepancies between modal verb presented in Malaysian textbooks and real English use. Prior to those studies, Römer (2004) has identified that the way modal verbs are presented in teaching materials in Germany differs from the use of those modal verbs in contemporary spoken British English. She suggests that the results of this corpus investigation can be used to design the proper teaching materials as the non-empirically based teaching materials can be misleading.

Methodology

This study collected data of modal verb use from *Bahasa Inggris XII* (Widiati et al., 2015), an English textbook for 12th grade of senior high school used in Indonesia based on Curriculum

2013, and a general reference corpus, COCA (Davies, 2008). The textbook and corpus comparisons were made to identify language used in textbooks compared to language data recorded in the corpus (Cheng & Warren, 2007; Molavi et al., 2014; Tsai, 2015). The corpus of the textbook was collected from the conversation sections in the textbook, and the size of the corpus is 4,734 words. The data (i.e., frequency of modal verbs) was collected by identifying the occurrence of modal verbs in the conversation section of the textbook by using the *AntConc* corpus tool (Anthony, 2019). In *AntConc*, the concordance feature was used for the textbook corpus to determine the frequency of the modal verbs (i.e., the token frequency). From COCA, the data was collected by keyword entries, i.e., the 35 modal verbs. Since COCA is a general reference corpus consists of eight sub-corpus or text genres such as fiction, academic, newspaper, blog, movies, web, magazine, and spoken. To solve the problems in this study, this research used the spoken sub-corpus of COCA comparable to the textbook conversations. There are more than 127 million words in the spoken sub-corpus of COCA (Davies, 2008). The keyword search was conducted by inputting the keyword into the search column in the *List* feature and sorting the part of speech (PoS) into the modal verbs (verb.MODAL), as shown in figure 1.



Figure 1 Keyword search in COCA

³⁴ In the analysis stage, the frequency of modal verbs in the corpus is normalized (nf) per one million words (see Brezina [2018]), while the frequency of the textbook is the raw frequency (rf) due to its small number of occurrences. The data analysis focuses on interpreting the frequency of modal verbs both in the textbook and COCA. In this study, the term token refers to the raw frequency since it focuses on the head-form. The interpretation relates the numerical data with relevant theories, such as sociolinguistics, since it is about language use and register analysis (Biber & Conrad, 2009) because this study deals with spoken language (e.g., conversation section of the textbook and spoken sub-corpus of COCA) as a mode of communication.

³⁷ Results and Discussion

This section discusses the frequency of modal verbs ³¹ in the textbook in comparison with that of COCA. To begin with, the analysis focuses on the ³ frequency of modal verbs used in conversation in the textbook.

Frequency of Modal Verbs in Textbook

In the textbook *Bahasa Inggris* for grade XII, there are some modal verbs used to express modality, such as core modals *can*, *will*, *may*, *might* as well as quasi-modals *have to*, *need to*, *be going to*, *be supposed to*, and *want to*. Below is the complete list of modal verb frequencies found in the conversation sections of the textbook.

Table 2

Frequency of modal verbs in textbook Bahasa Inggris for grade XII

Modal Verbs	Frequency (rf)
can	12
will	11
have to	8
should	7
need to	3
be supposed to	2
must	2
want to	1
be going to	1
may	1
might	1

Table 2 shows that there are 11 modal verbs found in the conversation sections of the textbook, with 6 core modals (out of 9 core modals) and 5 quasi-modals (out of 26 quasi-modals). The findings show that modal verb *can* occupy the highest position, followed by *will*, *have to*, and *should* respectively, as illustrated in figure 2.

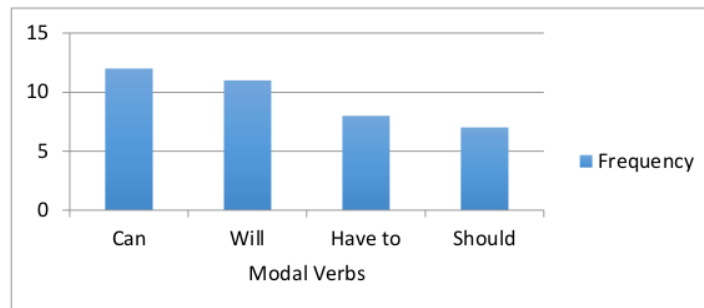


Figure 2 Modal verbs with the highest frequency in the textbook conversations

Figure 2 presents the most frequent modal verbs in the conversation parts of the textbook, clearly showing most of them belong to the core or central modals; they are *can*, *will*, and *should*. And there is one quasi-modal occupying the third most frequent modal verb, *have to*. It is compelling to see both core modals and quasi-modal occupying the four highest modal verbs in the textbook. As for the least frequent modal verbs used in the textbook, there are *want to*, *be going to*, *may*, and *might*; each modal verb is used once in the conversation sections. There are two core modals (*may*, *might*) and two quasi-modals (*want to* and *be going to*) occupying these positions. All of those verbs (*may*, *might*, *want to*, *be going to*) can be categorized as *hapax legomena* because they only appear once in the conversation of the textbook (Brezina, 2018).

Frequency of Modal Verbs in COCA

This section investigates the frequency of modal verbs as found in the spoken sub-corpus of COCA. Below is the complete list of the usage frequency.

Table 3

Frequency of modal verbs in spoken sub-corpus of COCA

Rank	verb	Modal (nf)	Freq	Rank	verb	Modal (nf)	Freq
1		would	2,768	19	be supposed to		81
2		can	2,527	20	be willing to		62
3		will	2,211	21	be about to		59
4	be going to		1,903	22	be allowed to		29
5	to	have	1,508	23	wanna		25
6		could	1,435	24	be likely to		22
7	to	want	1,119	25	shall		21
8		should	936	26	gotta		11
9		need	652	27	dare		10
10		may	632	28	would rather		9
11		might	466	29	be meant to		7
12	to	be able	335	30	be due to		6
13	to	need	334	31	be bound to		4
14		must	212	32	be inclined to		2
15	got to	have	175	33	had better		2
16		used to	172	34	be obliged to		0.8
17		gonna	132	35	be apt to		0.7
18	to	ought	99				

Table 3 presents the complete frequency of modal verbs in COCA and marks that there are four highest modal verbs in terms of their frequency of use; they are *would*, *can*, *will*, and *be going to*. The modal verb *would* occur 2,768 times per one million words, *can* occurs 2,527 times per one million words, *will* occurs 2,211 times per one million words, and *be going to*

occurs 1,903 times per one million word. The four most frequent modal verbs in spoken sub-corpus of COCA are presented in figure 3.

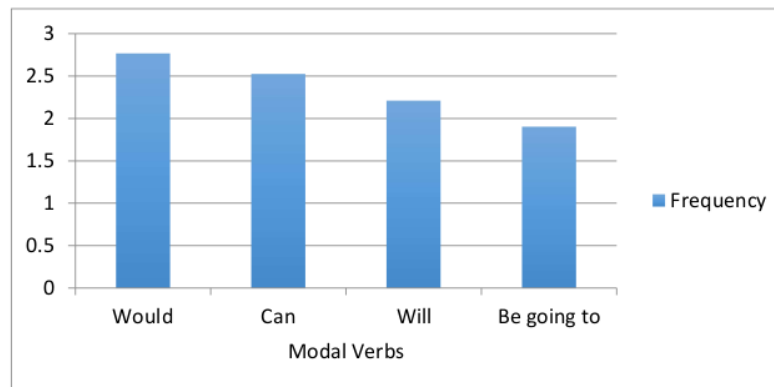


Figure 3 Modal verbs with the highest frequency in spoken sub-corpus of COCA

Considering that the data source is taken from spoken registers, it is obviously acceptable to see the use of *be going to* in the fourth highest. The first three most frequent modal verbs (*would*, *can*, *will*) belong to central or core modals, the prototype of the modal verb category. Hence, it is not surprising to find them in the highest use. The fourth position, intriguingly, is occupied by a quasi-modal *be going to*. This quasi-modal, based on Leech et al. (2009), tends to be more colloquial compared to its counterparts (e.g., *will*). In addition, the use of modal verb *have to* and *want to* also strengthen the characteristics of spoken language in the corpus, proving the hypothesis that both quasi-modals are likely to occur in spoken registers. Meanwhile, for the least frequent modal verbs, there are *be inclined to*, *had better*, *be obliged to*, and *be apt to* respectively, as shown in figure 4.

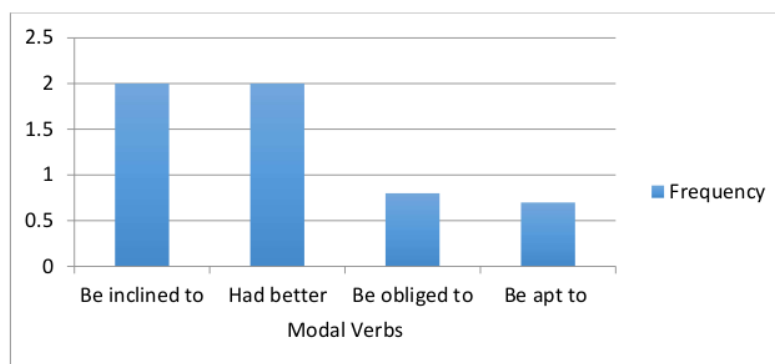


Figure 4 Modal verbs with the lowest frequency in spoken sub-corpus of COCA

Figure 4 presents all the lowest frequency modal verbs investigated in COCA, and all of them are quasi-modals. These results are not surprising due to the nature of the modal verb category. Core modals, albeit the decline (Leech et al., 2009), are *locked words* and relatively used more frequently than quasi-modals (Baker, 2011; Leech, 2013; Leech et al., 2009). It is interesting then to see how dynamic modal verb is, especially in spoken context, in which we can see the use of quasi-modals both in the highest and the lowest position. This underlies the reason for presenting modal verbs in the textbook.

Comparison Between Textbook and COCA

Based on the frequency of use of modal verbs, there are some discrepancies of the frequencies, as illustrated in figure 5.

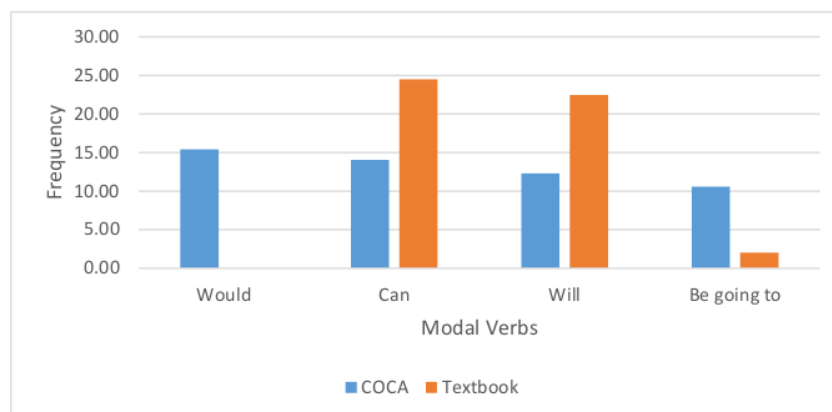


Figure 5 The most frequent modal verbs in COCA in comparison to the textbook (in percentage)

Given the results of frequencies both in the textbook and in the corpus, it is evident that there are some interesting points to highlight, either the similarities or the differences. As for the similarities, both textbook and COCA have presented core modals and quasi-modals altogether. Although core modals are the prototype of modal categories and belong to *locked words* (Baker, 2011; Brezina, 2018), the presentation of quasi-modals in the company of core modals is definitely complementary and able to equip the learners with more variants of modality realization. There is also the use of contracted form *'ll* (from the full form *will*) in the textbook, indicating that basically spoken language deals with efficiency, hence reduced forms are more preferable to minimize articulation (Crystal, 2008; Rogerson, 2006). It shows that some aspects regarding **the use of modal verbs in the** textbook do correspond to that in COCA.

Similarities and Differences of Modal Verbs in the Textbook and COCA

Regarding another similarity, it can be observed that the use of *have to* in the textbook is alike that in COCA. The use of *have to* is also more frequent than *must* either in the textbook

and COCA, showing that both are in accordance with the nature of spoken language, allowing for the use of more colloquial forms. The result of the investigation in COCA showing that *have to* is increasing is not surprising since it is part of the phenomena of Americanization; as stated by (Leech et al., 2009, p. 253) that increasing use of some quasi-modals is the colloquialization in American English. This marks two points: (1) quasi-modal usage is increasing, and (2) language change is moving to a speech-like style. Further discussion on these points, nevertheless, should be written in a different paper as it needs more space. Regardless, textbook language in terms of core modals and quasi-modal general usage, the existence of contracted form 'll, and the use of *have to* do correspond to that in real English use.

Despite the similarities in regard to the use of modal verbs in the textbook and in COCA, there are some differences to note, including the use of *be going to*, *would*, the variants of modal verbs, and the use of colloquial forms. In the conversation parts of the textbook, the use of quasi-modal *be going to* is surprisingly low (rf = 1). In COCA, *be going to* occupies the fourth most frequent modal verb, while the same position in the textbook is occupied by *have to*. Compared to the modal verb *will* (rf = 11), the gap between *will* and *be going to* is quite significant, indicating that in the conversation of the textbook, *be going to* is less prominent. According to (Biber & Conrad, 2009), following the results of corpus investigation, quasi-modals (or semi-modals) are used frequently in conversation. Quasi-modal *be going to* is one of the quasi-modals experiencing sharp increase (Biber & Conrad, 2009; Leech et al., 2009).

Another distinct frequency investigation is on the use of *would* as shown in COCA and textbook. In COCA, the modal verb *would* is the highest, but it is absent in the textbook. Perkins (1982: 265) claims that the use of preterite counterparts of modal verbs marks more

hypothetical, more tentative, more polite, more indirect, and more formal. This also holds for the use of *would*. As prediction is one of the basic human needs (related to *time*) (Rehm & Gadenne, 1990) and speakers do pay attention to semantic and pragmatic needs in real practice of language, thus it does make sense that *would* is of the highest. Moreover, *would* can also refer to ‘habitual past’ (McWhorter, 2018; Perkins, 1982). This fact is ignored or abandoned by the materials writer by not using *would* at all in the conversation section in the textbook. In textbook conversations, the modal verb *would* is absent (Table 1), but it is the most frequent modal verb in spoken COCA with 2,768 occurrences per one million words (table 2). The absence of *would* in the textbook should be taken into account because it might result in unfamiliarity in using *would* in conversation among learners, while it is actually used so frequently in spoken English as recorded in COCA (table 3 and figure 3).

Observing the findings, it is also intriguing to discuss the least frequent modal verbs in the textbook and COCA. All of the least frequent modal verbs in COCA are from the quasi-modal category (*be inclined, had better, be obliged to, be apt to*), not the core modal category. In the textbook, the least frequent modal verbs are *may, might, want to, and be going to*, both from core modals and quasi-modals. This is actually interesting since core modals occupying the least frequent positions in the textbook. The two quasi-modals *want to* and *be going to* are listed as colloquial modals of which they occur more frequently in conversation or other spoken registers as described by COCA and Leech et al.’s investigation (Leech et al., 2009). In the textbook, unfortunately, these quasi-modals are not well presented and become the *hapax legomena*, indicating the minimum presentation of the modal verbs. The overlook of quasi-modals in textbook conversations is not in line with the frequent use of quasi-modals in spoken corpora.

The Variants of Modal Verbs in the Textbook and COCA

Although both textbook and COCA use core modals and quasi-modals in terms of variants, the number of variants is different. COCA obviously provides all modal verbs, while the textbook merely uses a limited number of modal verbs—although it is understandable due to more limited space. For core modals, there are *can*, *will*, *must*, *should*, *may*, *might* (six out of nine core modals), and there are five quasi-modals (out of 26 quasi-modals), such as *have to*, *need to*, *be supposed to*, *want to*, *be going to*. Although textbook definitely has more limited space, the representativeness of modal verb variants should be considered quite well by the writers. As quasi-modals are typical to a conversation (Leech et al., 2009), they should also be presented well in the textbook conversations. In contemporary English, including spoken English, the use of quasi-modal is increasing (Biber & Conrad, 2009; Leech et al., 2009). Compared to other registers, the use of quasi-modals is the highest. Hence, the unequal use of core modals and quasi-modals in conversation, as shown in the textbook, is a mismatch that should be revisited. The core modals, however, remain the most frequent ones, indicating that, basically, modal verbs, in general, are important linguistic characteristic in conversation (Biber & Conrad, 2009; Biber & Quirk, 2012) since frequency indicates the usefulness and importance of the linguistic units (Baker, 2010; Bybee, 2007). In other words, the presentation of both core modals and quasi-modals in the textbook should be quite equal to achieve the communicative goal.

Another point to consider is the use of the contracted modal verb. In the textbook, there is only *'ll* (from *will*) used while there are some other contracted forms in relation to modal verbs, e.g., *'d* (*would*), *can't*, *won't*, etc. The contracted form *'ll* in the textbook is only found twice, and no other contractions are used.

(1)

2
Anita: May I help you?

Fatah: Yes, please. I need a book entitled “Visiting Seattle.”

Anita: Sure. We have one copy left. I’ll get it for you.

Fatah: Thanks.

(Widiati et al., 2015, p. 7)

(2)

2
Made: We have to submit the report of our visit to Lake Toba tomorrow, but I think there are still a lot of problems with the grammar, spelling, and so on.

Hilda: What if I take half of it, and I’ll edit the rest after I finish this one.

Made: That’s very thoughtful of you. Thanks a lot.

(Widiati et al., 2015, p. 7)

Conversation 1 takes place in a bookstore, and the conversation involves the buyer and the shopkeeper, so the context is casual and informal. Conversation 2 happens between friends discussing their report assignment. In regard to the context, the use of ‘ll, thus, is acceptable.

There are other informal conversations in the textbook, but contraction is not used, as in conversation (3).

(3)

Roni:? Our favorite singer Maher Zain is touring again next month.

Ida:! That

Roni: We *will* get a discounted price for the concert tickets in the news agency if we can show our student ID card

Ida: Let's do it.

(Widiati et al., 2015, p. 47)

Conversation (3) happens between friends with casual context, so the use of contracted form normally happens, although it is not, and there is the full form *will* instead, preceded by the pronoun *we*. In COCA, on the other hand, the use of *will* in the spoken register is 144.720 per one million words (in this study, it is counted as *will*). The pronoun *we*, based on COCA investigation, co-occur with *will* quite frequently, as shown in figure 6.

Corpus of Contemporary American English					SEARCH		FREQUENCY		CONTEXT		OVERVIEW	
92	1990	SPOK	CNN_NewsSun	A B C	FRANKEN	We need to take a break right here .	We	be back with more	in just a moment.	Commercial break FRANKEN		
93	2011	SPOK	CNN_Behar	A B C	? LONGORIA: Ok.	All right.	BEHAR: Ok.	We	have more with the lovely Eva	when we come back.	BEHAR:	
94	2010	SPOK	NBC_Dateline	A B C	out who did this,	we will arrest them.	we	convict them	MORRISON	: You really believe that yourself at		
95	2017	SPOK	Fox: Fox News Sunday	A B C	. Is repeal and replace in trouble ?	(voice-over):	We	ask Republican senator	Dr. Bill Cassidy.	Plus,	as North	
96	1994	SPOK	Ind_Limbaugh	A B C	led by Democrats	had nothing to do with politics.	We	be back after this	with midnight basketball leagues.	Wait till		
97	1991	SPOK	CNN_King	A B C	Sandy Shaw	and include more of your phone calls.	We	be back in	Washington on Monday.	Hugh Hefner is going to		
98	1993	SPOK	ABC_DayOne	A B C	PrimeTime on Thursday	and 20/20 on Friday,	and then	we	be back next week.	I'm Forrest Sawyer.	For all	
99	2016	SPOK	Fox: The Five	A B C	country.	And if we ca n't do it,	we	get them in	KELLY#	So you -- (APPLAUSE)		
100	2017	SPOK	ABC: The View	A B C	what ? We're going to go	prepare,	and	we	be right back with	the story of Joy.	You guys,	
101	2007	SPOK	Fox_O'Reilly	A B C	bigotry and outrages like the San Francisco	church invasion ?	We	find out	And later,	the ever controversial Ann Coulter		
102	2014	SPOK	NPR: Fresh Air	A B C	it again.	TERRY-GROSS#	Charlie Haden recorded in 1983.	We	continue our tribute to	him after we take a short break.		
103	2015	SPOK	Fox: The Five	A B C	want an -- and we have a	discussion.	WILLIAMS#	We	see how it goes.	PERINO#	Well,	thankfully France is on
104	2009	SPOK	CNN_Dobbs	A B C	took years to make it to the	Supreme Court.	We	tell you why	next.	PILGRIM	: More questions tonight about	
105	2012	SPOK	CBS: This Morning	A B C	ten,	nine Central with all the highlights.	And	we	talk to the night	's big winners.	That 's Friday here	
106	2009	SPOK	NPR_TellMore	A B C	next day they said if anybody comes	to school,	we	kill you	The headmaster got on his bicycle.	He pedaled		
107	1991	SPOK	PBS_Newshour	A B C	a compassionate,	caring way.	MS-WOODRUFF	: Well,	we	certainly have to see	what happens with the vote and what happens	
108	2014	SPOK	NPR: Fresh Air	A B C	originals.	Let 's take a short break and then	we	talk some more	;	This is FRESH AIR.	(MUSIC) TERRY-GROSS#	If
109	1993	SPOK	ABC_20/20	A B C	know what we're going to do,	but well.	we	for sure get her	to America	SHERR	You're convinced you can	
110	2007	SPOK	NPR_TellMore	A B C	MORE from NPR News.	Later in the program,	we	talk about	whether South Africa is at a political crossroads,			
111	1991	SPOK	ABC_Brinkley	A B C	then Kuwait will not longer have to	import gasoline.	We	be back with	all the rest of today's program in a			
112	1990	SPOK	CNN_King	A B C	and it's way up on the	best-seller list.	We	be right back	Commercial break KING	: Our guest is former		
113	2017	SPOK	Fox: The Five	A B C	and the police are now investigating what	happens next.	We	show it to you	when "The Five" returns.	GUTFELD#		

Figure 6 Contracted forms of we'll

The materials writers then can consider contracting pronoun *we* and modal verb *will* (conversation 3) into *we'll* to create a more natural dialogue in a colloquial context. This is ignored as in other parts of conversations in the textbook. More example of a contracted form related to the modal verb is *'d* (full form *would*) that is not found at all in the textbook. More importantly, the spoken register is known for its efficiency, thus allows for shortened or reduced forms, including modal verbs (Nesselhauf, 2014). Nonetheless, there is no phonetically reduced modal verb at all (e.g., *gonna*, *gotta*, *wanna*) used in the textbook. Meanwhile, one of the linguistic characteristics of conversation (and other spoken registers) is the use of contracted forms (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 90). It is plausible since, in conversation, the speakers often take shortcuts to make the communication effective and efficient. As exemplified in COCA, *gonna* (reduced form of *be going to*) is used 132 times per one million words. This corresponds to the need for spoken language to be spontaneous and be produced as fast as possible as a response to the interlocutors. Besides, naturally human will minimally use the effort to get the maximum result as stated by Zipf (1949) that is known as the *principle of least effort* which means that human tends to produce fewer words by contracting or reducing the words. In language practice, speakers are more likely to reduce the words or pronounce two words into one to minimize the articulation effort (Crystal, 2008; Rogerson, 2006). According to Nesselhauf (2014), contracted or reduced forms of modals can be found more frequently in spoken language. Hence, the absence of phonetically reduced modal verbs in a conversation of the textbook is not in accordance with the nature of spoken language.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that there are mismatches of modal verb use in the textbook and in the corpus. These results are in accordance with the results of the previous work on corpus investigation toward modal verbs in textbooks. This study confirmed

the results of the study conducted by several previous studies (Durán et al., 2007; Nordberg, 2010; Orlando, 2009; Römer, 2004), which emphasize that the modal verbs presented in textbooks are not in accordance with the use of modal verbs in the real use of English. In terms of the Asian context, this study corresponds to the studies carried out by Khojasteh & Kafipour (2012) and Mukundan & Khojasteh (2011), which also exhibit the discrepancies between modal verb presentation in textbooks and real use. This means that this study contributes to strengthen the scientific justification toward the quality of textbooks and to emphasize the significance of corpus in designing teaching materials, especially in presenting the language content (McEnery & Wilson, 2001).

Conclusion

The findings discussed in this study present some significant points to take into consideration. In regard to modal verb selection used in conversation sections of the textbook, there are some mismatches, including the absence of *would* as the most frequent modal verb in spoken sub-corpus of COCA, the absence of phonetically reduced modal verbs (i.e., *gonna*, *gotta*, *wanna*), the less various example of contracted forms, the less frequent use of *be going to* and *want to*, lack of colloquial modal verbs, and the limited variants of core modals and quasi-modals used in the textbook. It is evident that, although it is a conversation (i.e., spoken register), because it is written in/for textbook, the language used in the conversation is inevitably influenced by the written register. Meanwhile, conversation naturally involves participants producing language in real-time with limited time, so the speakers produce language by taking shortcuts, therefore allows the use of contractions and reduced modal verbs. Moreover, the use of *would* should be emphasized since it is the most frequent modal verb in spoken sub-corpus of COCA

due to its various pragmatic functions. The results of this corpus investigation, however, do not purport to claim correctness. Instead, it aims to map the probabilistic of language use, in this case, is modal verb use.

³² Based on the findings of this study, the textbook writers should consider how to present modal verbs in the textbook conversations, e.g., by looking at the most frequent modal verbs in a spoken corpus. As linguistic units may differ in particular genres or registers, it is also important to notice the language used in conversations, especially the modal verbs. For instance, the modal verb *would* in spoken sub-corpus of COCA is the most frequent one, but it is absent in the textbook conversations. The absence of a very frequent linguistic unit should be avoided in designing teaching materials. By consulting a corpus, materials writers can recheck their materials and pedagogically adjust them to meet the need of teaching and learning practice. This study can also contribute as a reference for other relevant studies within the Asian or EFL context, and this study can provide empirical basis in terms of modal verb discrepancies in textbooks and real use of English in the EFL context. As for future studies, it is expected that the studies can be carried out by analyzing more textbooks for other grades of senior high school level.

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